N°3

A SERMON

Preach'd at the

FUNERAL

OF

The HONOURABLE

Sir *STEPHEN FOX*, Kt.

November the 7th, 1716.

AT

FARLY in *WILTS.*

By RICHARD EYRE, A. M.
Canon Residentiary of the Church of *Sarum*

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PROV. iii. 16.

Length of Days is in her Right Hand, and in her Left Hand Riches and Honour.

THIS is ſpoken of *Wiſdom*, which you'll find mention'd before, *ver.* 13. where it is ſaid, *Happy is the Man that findeth Wiſdom.* So *Salomon* ſtiles *Religion* and *Virtue*, who knew, the beſt of any Man, what *Wiſdom* truly was. And in Truth, nothing elſe can have any juſt Title to that Name; tho' nothing be more common, than for the crafty Policy of the Wicked to *uſurp* it.

And as it was uſual with the *Ancients* to repreſent Wiſdom in the Perſon of a *Woman*, with her Arms ſtretch'd forth, not only to direct, but to reward her Followers: As ſhe ſtands in *Cebes*'s Table, plac'd on an Eminence above the *Vices*, and the *Pleaſures* of the World; inviting all that are able, to paſs by *Them*, to a *Superior*, and much *Happier State*. So *Salomon* here repreſents Wiſdom, in the like Form

of a noble Perſonage, ſhewing the *Happineſs* of a *Vertuous Life:* And makes her *Power* ſuch, as to have all Things of Worth and Value to beſtow, and her *Bounty* ſuch, as to be ready to preſent, with both Hands, the moſt valuable Things to all that are worthy of them.

It may be, in this place, He might, upon another more particular Reaſon, chooſe to ſet *Wiſdom* before us in this Figure, by way of Antitheſis to the *ſtrange, or Adulterous Woman* in the foregoing Chapter, whoſe Houſe he cautions Men to avoid, for that it inclineth unto Death; upon which he comes in this Chapter, to preſent Wiſdom to us as a much lovelier Perſon, and infinitely more worthy of our Eſteem; for that *ſhe* never fails of making thoſe *Happy* who obtain Her. She *generally* makes them happy in a *long Life:* in a *plentiful Fortune;* and in an *honourable Character* and *Reputation.* *Theſe* are the *Bleſſings* ſhe holds forth to us: *Length of Days* in her Right Hand; and in her Left Hand *Riches* and *Honour.*

But beſides that God is pleaſed to give ſuch Encouragements to *Religion* in his *Holy Word,* which ſhall laſt to all Ages, He is in his Infinite Goodneſs further pleaſed, in every Age, to ſhew us this *Exemplified* in ſome very *Signal Inſtances,* in Perſons ſo bleſſed in the Reward of their *Wiſdom,* or their great

great *Virtue* and *Piety*. And Inſtances of this kind, when they are very Remarkable, ſtrike ſo on Men's *Senſes*, that however they may overlook ſuch a *Text*, or paſs it over with little or no Reflection upon it, yet they ſhall not be able to avoid obſerving the *Truth* of it ſo *Exemplified* and *Fulfill'd*; when the Light of it ſhines before Men in ſuch *Illuſtrious Objects* of their *Admiration* as draw all Men's Eyes upon them; as arreſt and fix their Thoughts on the mighty *Encouragements* to *Virtue* which they ſee in them, and will force Reflections from them, which ſhall very ſenſibly affect them; and which are often found the moſt Powerful of all *Outward Motives* to incline Men to the like *Virtuous Courſes*.

And whenever God ſets before our Eyes the Rewards of *Wiſdom* in any ſuch great Inſtances as *Theſe*; we are to look upon it not only as an Act of God's great Bounty to *Thoſe* of his Servants, whom we ſee bleſs'd in ſo Remarkable a manner, but as an Act of his Goodneis and Kindneſs to *that Age* in which He is pleaſed to raiſe up thoſe Conſpicuous and moſt Powerful Encouragements to all Men to purſue the ſame Courſe thoſe ſhining *Examples* ſhew: For however their Vertues alone might paſs unregarded, Men will look on them with *Regard*, when they ſee the *Luſtre* of their *Attendants*; their *Riches* and *Honour*.

Now

Now the Goodneſs of God, in this Method of his Providence to encourage *Piety* and *Vertue*, hath not in *This*, or perhaps in any *former Age*, appear'd more *ſignally* than in the happy Eſtate of *this Eminent Perſon*, whoſe Remains are now before us. Nor are we likely ever to have any Man's Character, that ſhall better recommend to us that *Wiſdom* which is ſo recommended in the *Words* of the *Text*: And therefore I know not how I can better improve a *Diſcourſe* upon them, than by making ſome Reflections on that *Memorable Life* which will beſt deſcribe this *Wiſdom*, with all the great *Rewards* of it.

And as we are now on the Place of his *Birth*, where the *Monuments* we ſee of it may be *Examples* to the World in this and all ſucceeding Ages, of *Piety* towards God, and of *Charity* to our Poor Brethren, (* This Structure will ever be a Noble Teſtimony of his *Love of God*, and the † other is like unto it, in the Teſtimony it gives of his *Love to his Neighbour*.) Should I paſs it over in Silence, that in this Place this *Great Man* had his *Birth*? of *Honeſt Parents*; of *Good Report*; particularly the great Care they were

* *A Church built at his Charge.*

† *An Hoſpital for Six Old Men, and Six Old Women: A neat Building with a Chappel in it, and handſome Lodgings for a Chaplain, who reſides there, and hath the Title of Warden of the Hoſpital. It is endow'd with* 188*l.* per Annum. *There is likewiſe a Charity School, wherein are taught Six Boys, and Six Girls, all at his ſole Charge.*

obſerv'd

observ'd to take in well *Educating* and *Disposing* of their *Children* was remarkable in *their* Circumstances, which at that time were not Great. I speak this to *His* greater Honour, for (if I may on this Occasion be allow'd to say it) 'tis more to his real Honour, than if he had *found* his Family as *Great* as he has *left* it. Other Notions, I know have long obtain'd among us; and if they had not, the Person we are now speaking of, had lost an Opportunity he frequently took of exercising his *Humility*; as he often took Occasion to mention his Condition before his *Advancement*.

And if after such mention of his *Birth*, we take no more Notice of his *Private Condition*, (tho' much of that might be very *Exemplary*) we shall pass over but a small Part of his Life: For when the great *Historian of our Age* speaks of him, as the most serviceable Person about the King, *Charles* the Second, when beyond Sea; at which time *the Charge of governing the Expences of the Kings Family was committed to him*; He thinks fit to take express Notice of his being a *Young Man* for such a Charge: He might be then about Seven and Twenty: an Age that's rarely Qualified for governing the Affairs of an ordinary Family; Yet at *that Age He* wanted no Qualification which such a *Province* could require; as that *Great Judge* bears him Witness; *He was then very well furnish'd with Languages, Honesty and Discretion, for the discharge*

diſcharge of ſuch a Truſt; and his great Induſtry, Modeſty and Prudence did very much contribute to the bringing that Family, which for many Years had been under no Government, into very good Order; by which his Majeſty in the pinching Streights of his Condition enjoy'd very much Eaſe from that time.

Among the many *Characters* (which are the great Ornaments of that *Noble Hiſtory*,) we may juſtly queſtion whether there be any *One* more remarkable than *This*; wherein we ſee in ſo *Young a Man* not only thoſe excellent Qualities, which might be the Happineſs of a *good Temper*, or the Effect of a good *Education*; but ſo much *Prudence* and *Diſcretion*, that there ſeem'd to be nothing left for him to learn from the Experience of his riper Years. But all his *Life* after was ſo full of Good Works of all Kinds; to the *Glory* of *God*, the *Honour* of the *Kingdom*, the *Benefit* of the *Publick*, and the *Relief* of the *Poor* of all Sorts; and many of them ſo very * *Extraordinary* in their Kind, as may make us look on all we ſee of him in that *Character* but as the *Beginning* of his *Wiſdom*. Surely few have been known to Begin with ſo great

* *He was the firſt Projector of the Noble Deſign of* Chelſea *Hoſpital, and contributed to the Expence of it, above* 13000*l. and his Motive to it, I know, from his own Words, he ſaid.* He could not bear to ſee the Common Souldiers, who had ſpent their Strength in our Service, to beg at our Doors, *and therefore did what he could to remove ſuch a Scandal to the Kingdom.*

a Stock, and no *One* ever made greater Improvement of the Stock he began with.

We ſee at what Age *He* by his *Wiſdom* contributed more to the Relief of the King in his Exile, than the greateſt Subject in *England* could do out of his *Eſtate*; or than the greateſt *Prince* Abroad who gave him Aſſiſtance. For whatever They contributed to the Support of the King it was owing to *his* Prudent and Faithful *Management* that it was *ſufficient*. Whatever were the Contributions they made to the King before, they were not enough to make Him eaſy; but whatever they were afterwards, there was no want to make the King uneaſy; for *his Method in the Managery*, (ſays the ſame Hiſtorian, in another place) *gave the King great Eaſe; contented and kept the Family in better Order than could reaſonably have been expected; and was the more ſatisfactory by the no Care and Order that had been obſerved all the Time before.* And it was but juſt, that the precedent Irregularity, which made the Task more *Difficult*, ſhould make his Performance the more *Satisfactory*.

And when the King returned, and had receiv'd his Kingdom; his *good and faithful Servant* was then to receive his *Reward*: and he had then as great Authority given him as over *many Cities*. He was then ſet to govern the Expences of one of

the Greateſt Courts in *Europe*. But every *Reward* he receiv'd entitled him to a *further Reward*: For diſcharging the firſt *Truſt*, his *Reward* was a greater *Truſt*; accordingly he was made *Pay-Maſter of the Army*; and the faithful Diſcharge of That again gave him a Title, and recommended him ſtill to a *further Truſt*. So he reſted in none, till he was advanc'd to be *One of the Lords of the Treaſury*; in which Place he was thought ſo very Serviceable, that, when he could not have any thing Greater (unleſs he had been rais'd above the Degree of a *Commoner*, which he would never have yielded to) he was kept in it above Twenty Years; which was more perhaps than could ever be ſaid of any Man but himſelf. And the longer he continued in thoſe, or other Places of great Truſt; the more and greater Places he went through, the more and greater Proofs he ſtill gave of a *Capacity* above them all; and of a *Mind* above all Corruption; ſo that *He* was allow'd to get a great Eſtate in Places at Court, without ever having his *Integrity* once call'd in queſtion: A rare Felicity with our Great Men! and ſcarce ever to be expected in a Kingdom *Divided* as this, wherein great Part, I fear I may ſay one half of the Nation, ſets itſelf to believe, and to ſpeak ill of the other.

It was indeed the *ſingular Happineſs* of Sir *Stephen Fox*, to have the univerſal good Will, and

good

good Word of all Sides; of which a late Occasion happened to give a very full Testimony. When Mr. *Fox*, his beloved Son, died, who had been Representative for the Neighbouring City of *New Sarum*, in many Parliaments; his Father, among the other Circumstances of his Affliction, look'd upon himself to be depriv'd of the Satisfaction he had long had in serving, in his own Person, or his Sons, for that City; for which he ever retain'd a particular Kindness. But that his Kindness for the Place prevail'd on him to resume the Thoughts of taking his Seat in Parliament again, and *at this Age* to take a Resolution to offer his Service again. This was in the height of our *Divisions*, when it might have been thought impossible to have found a Man in whom the two contending Parties should agree; but *He* was one with whom *all were pleased*; and he was *unanimously* chosen in the 87th Year of his Age; and sat in Parliament in the Reign of our present Sovereign King GEORGE; and fill'd the same Place he had sat in about the Middle of the *last Century*, when he was Member for the same City, Immediately after the Restoration of King *Charles* the Second. And in that his last Session he was often seen to attend the House, as if not his Life only, but his Youth had been extended to that length. And now after the Conclusion of so long a Life, we can't but observe it was before he

came to any of the *Infirmities* of *Old Age*, which could make his Life burthenſome either to himſelf, his Friends, or his Servants. And now it has pleaſed God to take *him* out of the World, it may be hard to find any *one* Man left in it, who would be thought worthy of the ſame *Eſteem* by two oppoſite Parties, or in whom both Sides would place the ſame *Confidence* they plac'd in *Him*.

It muſt be own'd, Wiſdom doth not beſtow all the ſame Happineſs on every one that findeth her; but diſtributes to them their Portion in a very different meaſure, with more Reaſon than we are at preſent able to diſcern: Her Bounty to *Him* was as if ſhe *emptied both her Hands*, and held back nothing from him. He had the Bleſſing of her *Right Hand* in the *Length* of his *Days*; Few ſince the firſt Ages of the World have ſeen more *good Days* than *He*. And he had thoſe of her *Left Hand* in his *Riches* and *Honour*; Very few have been known to abound more in Riches got by their own Induſtry; and we have known no Man get the like with ſo *clean a Character*, and carry a *good Name* like *his* to the Grave. Indeed he wanted nothing that could contribute to ſo *ſingular a Happineſs*. He had many Vertues that were a *Guard* to his Character; as the general *Civility* and *Courteſy* he us'd to all Men; which

was the Effect not of his *good Breeding* only, but of his *good Will* to all Men: And much of that was to be *seen* (it *shone forth*) in his *Countenance*, that Language in which Men *naturally* speak Truth. There was a great deal of *Sincerity* appeared in all his Profeſſions of Kindneſs to his Friends; and that was mightily confirm'd by the readineſs that was ever found in him to anſwer thoſe Profeſſions by *real Services* to any who could have the leaſt Pretence to ask a Favour of him: His readineſs to ſerve them always gave ſuch Satisfaction, that it would be Injuſtice to deny *him* that Character that hath been allow'd to one Man in Power in the World before, that *No Man ever came from him diſſatisfied.*

But among his many Vertues, which in ſo peculiar a manner endear'd *him* to all Men, and will endear his *Memory* to all Poſterity, the Principal was that which is the Principal Grace in the Chriſtian Religion, his *Charity*, which was unconfin'd; it was ſeen to be as general as the Wants of the Poor, and that will be ſeen for ever in his ſettled Charities in the ſeveral * Coun-

* In Suffolk he built an Hoſpital at Brome.
In Northamptonſhire an Hoſpital at Ashby.
In Somerſetſhire a Charity-School at Redlinch, where 9 Girls are taught to Read, and to Work; are Dieted, Lodg'd and Cloth'd, and a Fund is ſettled for the putting them out.
An Account hath been given of his Hoſpital and Charity-School in Wiltſhire.

tiers

ties where he had any Concern; And what is little leſs Remarkable than his vaſt Expence in all his *Good Works*, he had the Heart to do them all in his Life time.

He ſhew'd a ſpecial Regard, and more generous Kindneſs to all that could claim the Benefit of *Relation* to him: That was ſuch, ſo Liberal, and in ſo many and various Inſtances, as may incline us to believe it might, for *his Time*, be of as great Advantage to his *Relations*, as the Priviledges that are enjoy'd by the *Kindred* of the moſt Munificent Founder in either of our *Univerſities*.

And for his neareſt, or his Domeſtick Relations, as he was a *Husband*, a *Parent*, or a *Maſter*: They who were generally near him; they who ſaw him in the dayly exerciſe of many Vertues; who ſaw his *Religious and Prudent Government in his Family*, his own *Exemplary Piety*, his conſtant *Charity*, his ſtrict *Temperance* in the great *Abundance* of his *Fortune* and of his *Hoſpitality*, the *Sweetneſs and Chearfulneſs of his Temper*, which he ever had like his Health, with little or no Interruption. They who ſaw moſt of his *Wiſdom*, and were moſt particularly intereſted in it, who were *All* ſharers in the Rewards of it (for he always lov'd to have even the meaneſt of his *Servants* thrive under him) they all knew his Value, and were ſo highly ſenſible of

their

their *Happiness* in him, that I believe I may say even the *Loss* of him will not be able to add to the Sense they had of the Blessing whilst they enjoy'd it.

And he was not less happy in his *Family*. His *first Lady* was in her self, no small addition to the *Felicity* of his Life, who brought with her many excellent Vertues, particularly the like *bountiful Disposition* to joyn with *his*. She was often us'd to express a very great Sense of the Plenty of *Blessings* God had given them, and with respect to the *Riches* she saw flowing in upon them, she was often heard to say to her Husband, that it obliged them to do good in a Measure answerable. And not a few of the great Things that were done for *His Relations*, were known to be first mov'd by *Her*; and none of his Designs in favour of *Them* ever wanted her Encouragement, but she still promoted them: She always further'd them, and many times *improv'd* them. And this, after she had brought him a *Numerous Issue*, which tho' it adds a Value to a Man's Riches, making what before was for *Life* only, become *Inheritance*; yet it often encloses what would otherwise be of more common Benefit. And his *Happiness in his Children* by that Lady was (like all *his Felicity*) more than common; and how much Children are commonly esteem'd to add to the happiest Circumstances of the greatest

Men,

Men, we may judge from that paſſionate Expreſſion of *Abraham*, when in the great abundance of Bleſſings he was at that Time poſſeſs'd of, with an expreſs Aſſurance of greater, he ſaid unto God, *Lord God what wilt thou give me, ſeeing I go Childleſs?*

Now there is an *Affliction*, which commonly goes along with the *Bleſſing of Long Life*, and which no Man can hope to eſcape, who hath his Life extended ſo far beyond what is common: ſo far beyond the *Age of Man* as to *Ninety Years*: And that is to ſee moſt of our neareſt Relations, even our Children, go down to the Grave before us. And from this, the *Perſon* whoſe Length of Days we are now conſidering, was not exempt. He buryed his *Lady*, and all *her Children* but * one, who is now living, and hath many Deſcendants from her in one of the nobleſt Families of this Nation. But I would rather look upon this in another Light, which may ſhew it among the *Bleſſings* of his Life. The greateſt Stranger to the Family will ſuppoſe (if but from their *Education* only) the Death of his Children, to have been *the Death of the Righteous*. Now tho' we yield ſo far to *Natural Affection*, as to ſuffer it to afflict us with Sorrow at the

* *The Counteſs of* Northampton.

Death

Death of our Friends, yet when we have recourſe to our *Faith*, and we truſt they are *Happy* in another Life, we ſhall find a *Hope*, and a *Joy*, greater than our *Sorrow*. And when God was pleas'd ſo to make tryal of *his Faith and Obedience*, and I don't know whether there be any greater *Tryal* of *Both* than the Death of our deareſt Friends and Relations; or whether any thing can be a greater *Proof* of *Both*, than a due Submiſſion to the *Divine Will* on thoſe Occaſions: I ſay, when God was pleas'd ſo to make Tryal of *his Faith and Obedience*, and He, with great Submiſſion to the Will of God, reſign'd thoſe whom he eſteemed the chiefeſt of his Bleſſings to him from whoſe Goodneſs he receiv'd them; this muſt certainly give *him* greater Aſſurance than he could have before of his *Faith* and *Truſt in God*, and of the *Reſignation* of his Will to the *Divine Providence*. God had before made a very different Tryal of his Faithfulneſs, by committing to his Charge, a great Treaſure, which he, like a faithful Steward, diſpens'd according to the Directions of his Lord, (ſuch a Flow of Proſperity might have been too ſtrong for a weaker Mind: it is often ſeen to carry Mens Thoughts clear off from Religion, to cauſe Men to think leſs of God, and their Dependance upon Him, and to forget their *Truſt* and their Duty to him.) But the *Stedfaſtneſs* of a Man's *Faith* is beſt ſeen in his *Afflictions*, thoſe I have been ſpeaking of; eſpecially wherein too

many, I fear, of the beſt among us forget their Duty to God; or do not ſufficiently conſider the Obedience they owe to *His Will*; and therefore nothing will ſo aſſure a Man's *Heart* before God, as when he can approve his Submiſſion in the ſevereſt Inſtances of thoſe Afflictions. I am ſure, there is nothing can afford him the like *Comfort* and *Satisfaction*, all his Life after, as when he can ſay, now I know that I fear God, ſince I have ſhewn no Reluctancy, and have felt no Diſcontent at his taking from me the Perſon, whoſe Life of all others, I ſhould moſt have deſired; when I am ſatisfied, that I have not by any Reluctancy to his Will, withheld my *Wife*, or my *Son*, or would not have withheld my *only Son* from him.

Happy is that Man whoſe *Heart* does not condemn him for any *immoderate Sorrow* on the Death of his deareſt Friends or Relations; which to a good Man, is of all others the ſharpeſt Tryal, and in which very few *good Men* are able to *hold faſt their Righteouſneſs*; but that this excellent Perſon held *his*, like *holy Job*, we have great reaſon to believe, becauſe we have ſeen him rewarded like *Him*, in that *God bleſſed his latter End, as he did his Beginning*; when God gave him, at ſo great an Age, *more Sons and Daughters*: And the great Felicity he was known to enjoy in his *Lady* now Living, and his *Children* by Her, is no ſmall reaſon to induce us to look

look upon them, as *Rewards* of his Submiſſion to the Divine Providence, when he parted with his firſt Lady and her Children, with ſo much Reſignation to *his Will*, who before had given them to him, and then was pleas'd to take them to himſelf.

But as we have obſerv'd in the few Reflections made on his *Life*, how he was remov'd from one Place of Honour and Profit to another, as the ſeveral *Temporal Rewards* of his Wiſdom: let us now turn our Reflexions to his laſt Remove to his *Final and greateſt Reward* in his Everlaſting Happineſs of the other Life; for we muſt not look on his Death to put an End to the Recompence of his Wiſdom. All he receiv'd on Earth, how great ſoever it may ſeem, is but the leaſt part of it. His Godlineſs has the Promiſe not of this Life only, but of that which is to come; his good Works follow him, and have (as we undoubtedly believe) advanc'd him in the Kingdom of Heaven, where the *Leaſt* is *Greater* than he could be made in this or any Earthly Kingdom.

On *Earth*, *Length of Days* was his Reward: In *Heaven*, *Eternal Life*; and the greateſt Length of Days, or the longeſt Life upon Earth bears not the leaſt Proportion to Eternity; and therefore He who is Eternal; the Son of God, ſpeaks of all the Time of this World but as one Day, and of all the Goſ-

pel Age, or of all the Ages of Chriſtianity, but as one Hour, but as the laſt Hour.

Here he receiv'd Riches and Honour; and if a Man could be perfectly Happy in Riches and Honour, he might have been ſo; but the Soul of Man hath Affections and Deſires, which all the *Treaſure*, and all the *Glory* of this World are too little to ſatisfie; as its Love of God, and its Deſire of enjoying Him. We have ſeen *his* Love of God, we have an Inſtance of it before our Eyes in the *Structure*, under whoſe Roof we now ſtand; and there are many other * like Inſtances of his *Piety* to be ſeen. And now in his Heavenly State, wherein his Love is made Perfect, he is admitted into the Preſence of God, whom he lov'd, to ſtand before him for ever, *in whoſe Preſence is fulneſs of Joy.*

* *He built another Church at* Culford *in* Suffolk. *He Pew'd the Body of the Cathedral Church of* Sarum *in a very neat manner, ſuitable to the Neatneſs of that Church, to which he was many other ways a great Benefactor.*

In the North Part of Wilts *he built a Chancel intirely new, where he was not at all concerned in the Tithes, but the Rectors not being able to do it mov'd him to build it.*

There is another Chancel, in a manner, new built by him, at Redlinch *in* Somerſetſhire, *where he purchaſed the great Tithes of the Value of* 90 l. *per Annum lately, being induced to make that Purchaſe by the meaneſs of the Vicarage, and the ill Condition in which he ſaw the Church and Chancel, which he repair'd immediately, and appropriated the Whole to ſeveral Charitable Uſes.*

His great Desire here was to please God, and he is now in that Happy State that is perfectly suited to that holy Desire, where he is out of Danger of ever offending God more, and where he shall never see any thing that is displeasing to him. Whereas in this imperfect State, the best of Men have reason to fear there is not a Day passes, wherein they do not offend God: however, they must every Day that passes, see a *general Neglect* of Him, in a general Neglect of his *Worship*, and very commonly a *Profane Contempt* of him, in the Profaneness, and great Wickedness, that is common in the World. And it may not be the least among the Consolations of a Righteous Soul at its Separation from the Body, that it is going to leave this *Evil World*: A Place of much *Natural*, but of more *Moral* Evil.

In this Life, whilst we are in the Body, and the Soul is fetter'd with such Affection to it, as makes it very hard to be reconciled to our *Dissolution*: The most Pious Christian may scarce be able to rise to St. *Paul*'s Wish, so as to desire to be Dissolv'd to be with Christ; yet we cannot doubt, but when the Dissolution is made, the Soul rejoyces in the *Happiness* it finds in its *separate Estate* with Christ, and praises God for it, and would be very unwilling to return to its former Estate in the Body. When I think of the

Death

Death of St. *John* the *Beloved Diſciple*, (who was diſtinguiſh'd from the reſt of the Diſciples by that Character, and by that length of Days which ſeem'd to be granted him as a Mark of that peculiar Love of Chriſt to him) I am not a little affected with the Joy I imagine *He* had immediately upon his Diſſolution, when he found himſelf again with *Chriſt*, after ſo long abſence from Him: When he came to be with Him in that *everlaſting, immutable State*, wherein he was never more to be parted from Him. I could not conſider the length of *his* Days who hath been the Subject of my Diſcourſe, eſpecially as he had ſuch Strength and Vigour to the laſt, but it would lead my Thoughts to that Diſciple, of whom *it was ſaid, that he ſhould not die*: And what was ſo often Remark'd of Him, I need not ſcruple to ſay of this pious Perſon, That *He* was a Diſciple whom *Jeſus* loved.

And after the great length of *his* Days, which was a Bleſſing to *Him*, to his *Family*, to the *Publick*, to the *World*; could he have any thing upon Earth, even in *his happy Circumſtances*, ſo Engaging, as to make him unwilling to be taken from it? If it had pleaſed God, before the Concluſion of his Life, to have given him Notice of it by any previous Sickneſs that ſhews the approach of Death, can we believe *He* would have thought

thought all the Happineſs of the Life he was to quit, worthy his looking back upon? unleſs to Praiſe God for it. Could he have thought it worthy of his looking back with any *Deſire* to it, or any *Regret* at his leaving it? What could he have regretted the Loſs of? A few Goods, which he poſſeſſed here, for ſo I may call *all his Store*, in compariſon of his *Treaſure in Heaven*. Or, could he be loth to leave a Life, which even in its happieſt Circumſtances, ſuch as *His* were, is a mixt State of Good and Evil, of Pleaſure and Diſpleaſure? No—— What is hardeſt to a *good Man* to leave at his Death (and what queſtionleſs would have been ſo to *Him*) are the Friends and Relations he is to take a final leave of. But the beſt of *Husbands*, and the beſt of *Fathers*, muſt be a better *Chriſtian* than to love *Wife* or *Children* more than *God*. And his Happineſs in *Them* can be nothing like what the Bleſſed enjoy, who enjoy *God*; who partake of the Happineſs of God, becauſe they enjoy Him: And all that is not God, is nothing to him who enjoys God Himſelf.

Should not our *Faith in Chriſt* then do more than barely Reconcile us to Death? When *He* bids us come to Him: If *Nature* ſhould ſhew ſome Fear, and we ſhould begin to ſink, yet if *Chriſt* be then pleaſed to ſtretch forth his Hand to Sup-

port

port us, should we not go to Him rejoycing, and might we not look upon it as the last Pleasure of our Life, to see it Expiring?

But if God was pleased to withhold from this Righteous Person, the Joy and Comfort there may be in the Death of the Righteous; he being thought not to have been *sensible* at his Death, yet no doubt he had before, in the midst of Life, often tasted of that Comfort in his usual Meditations on Death; for perhaps no Man of the weakest, or most crasie Constitution, liv'd under a greater Sense of his *Mortality* than he. And if God thought not fit to give him any Notice of Deaths approaching towards him, we may believe he saw he wanted none. We may presume so far on the same Goodness, which granted him such a *length of Days*, that he wou'd not have denied him a few more to *prepare* for his *Death*, if He had seen it needful for him. We have seen, that he had long before done what few Men do but when they *prepare for* Death: He had settled his Charities. And tho' he might be one of those *Just Persons who needed no Repentance*; yet we may believe him to be receiv'd into the blessed Mansions of the Saints with *particular Joy*, where, at his Entry, not a few Righteous Souls might meet him full of Acknowledgments of his Kindness to them on Earth, in *feeding them when they were Hungry*, and

and *clothing them when they were Naked*, and making such Provision for all the Neceſſities of their Bodies, as left them no Care but of providing for that other Life, in which they then rejoyc'd to ſee their *Benefactor*; certainly they muſt feel a particular Joy in *his* Happineſs, who had contributed ſo much to *Their*, by his *Charity*, both to their Bodies, and their Souls.

And Now in what hath been ſaid of the *Wiſdom*, the Religion and Virtue of our deceaſed Friend for (ſuch he was to all who had the Honour to be known to him) it can't be imagin'd that any thing hath been ſaid to flatter his *Memory*, when I have ſaid no more than the *World* knows of him: Much leſs can it be done to pleaſe any of his *ſurviving Relations*, who muſt needs know *more Good* of him than the *World* does, and a great deal more than I have touch'd on. To avoid all *Suſpicion* of ſo mean a Practice from the Pulpit, I have declin'd the Character, the *Great Character*, I might juſtly have given, of the neareſt Relation he hath left behind him: *His ſurviving Lady*, I choſe rather barely to mention to Remarkable a *Bleſſing to him*. It may be eſteem'd a *Publick Bleſſing* to have his Name continued to another Age, in an Heir to his Eſtate, and we may hope to his Vertues. He will have, in his *Name*, a *conſtant Monitor* to direct him to that *Wiſ-*

dom which made it ſo *Beloved* and *Reverenced* for an Age down to the Time it was left to *Him*.

And in the *little* I have ſaid of him, I wou'd not have it imagin'd, I could have any Thoughts of attempting a juſt Character of him, or that I could hope in ſo ſmall a Compaſs to deſcribe *ſo Long and ſo Good a Life*: A Life ſo Uſeful to the *laſt Age*, and ſo Exemplary to *This*, that if I were capable of giving a juſt Deſcription of it, I ſhould judge it the beſt and moſt inſtructive *Sermon* I could Preach.

But from the few Reflections I have made on the Life of this Excellent Perſon, we may *partly* judge of the *Good* he has done in the World, and we may hope the *Example* of ſo *pious and uſeful a Life* may yet do a great deal more Good. *His Life* alone, if we had a juſt Account of it, might of it ſelf be enough (could we hope to have it ſo far Conſider'd) to ſhame the *Church of Rome* out of their idle way of Cloiſtering up ſuch Numbers of Men, and many of them, it may be of the greateſt Abilities, who all put together, have not in an Age done the Good, *This One Man* hath done by *his Wiſdom*, as he employ'd it with ſo much Diligence and Induſtry in the World.

And *Happy* shall *We* be, if the great Encouragements to a Vertuous and Religious Life, which we have seen in this great *Example* of that *true Wisdom*, shall engage *Us* to live like *Him*; to use our utmost Diligence to improve our *Talents*, our Abilities, and Opportunities of doing Good, in all our different Circumstances of Life, that God may give us more, and we may still employ All he gives in *His* Service. Blessed is that Servant whom his Lord when he cometh, at whatever Hour he cometh, shall find so doing.

FINIS.

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